

John Boehner
Chairman
8th District, Ohio

House Meets at 10:00 a.m. for Legislative Business

Anticipated Floor Action:

H.R. 2696—Vessel Hull Design Protection Act

H.R. 2294—Federal Courts Improvement Act

H.R. 3117—Civil Rights Commission Act

S. 758—Lobbying Disclosure Technical Amendments

H.Con.Res. 227—Directing the President to Remove U.S. Armed Forces from Bosnia

H.R. 1757—Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act



Bills Considered Under Suspension of the Rules

Floor Situation: The House will consider the following four bills under suspension of the rules as its first order of business today. Each is debatable for 40 minutes, may not be amended, and requires a two-thirds majority vote for passage.

H.R. 2696—Vessel Hull Design Protection Act amends current federal copyright law to provide protection against copyright infringement of original vessel hull designs for boats sold for recreational use. Specifically, the bill extends legal protection so that vessel hulls or component parts which make a vessel distinctive in appearance to consumers—which directly influences the sales and marketing of one product over a competitor—cannot be copied or otherwise manipulated by a competing vessel manufacturer. H.R. 2696 establishes 10-year copyrights for such vessels. However, the bill does not extend copyright protection to boat designs that are (1) not original, (2) a staple or commonplace feature to most other vessels, or (3) included in a boat part that was made public (by being included in a manufactured line of boats) by its designer or owner more than one year prior to the date the owner moved to register his copyrighted pattern.

The bill also (1) grants owners of protected designs exclusive rights to make, import, sell, or distribute for sale or trade usage any vessel hull embodying protected designs; (2) stipulates that copyright protections provided in the bill can only be extended to a design copyright application if it is made

within one year after the date on which the design is first made public; (3) authorizes design owners a right of appeal in order to seek judicial review of final refusals of their design registration applications; and (4) grants the U.S. district courts jurisdiction over lawsuits which arise under provisions of the bill. CBO estimates that enactment of H.R. 2696 will have no significant effect on the federal budget. H.R. 2696 was introduced by Mr. Coble and was reported by the Judiciary Committee by voice vote on March 3, 1998.

H.R. 2294—Federal Courts Improvement Act makes a variety of technical, organizational changes regarding the administration of the U.S. federal court system. Most of the changes relate to salaries, personnel, and operating procedures of federal courts. The bill does not, however, significantly restructure the daily operational procedures of the court system. Some specific provisions of the bill include (1) authorizing the establishment of magistrate judge positions in district courts located in Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; (2) authorizing a judge or judicial officer to carry a firearm, whether concealed or not, under regulations outlined by the Judicial Conference; and (3) repealing an exemption from jury service for fire or policy personnel, and other public officers who are actively engaged in their official duties when called to serve on a jury. CBO estimates that enactment of H.R. 2294 will have no significant effect on the federal budget. H.R. 2294 was introduced by Mr. Coble and was reported by the Judiciary Committee by voice vote on March 3, 1998.

H.R. 3117—Civil Rights Commission Act reauthorizes the U.S. Civil Rights Commission for an additional four years, through 2001. The bill also (1) establishes a four-year term of office for the commission's staff director, including a mandatory annual review of the director's performance by the commission; (2) applies the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the Privacy Act, the Sunshine Act, and the Federal Advisory Committee Act to the commission in an attempt to increase the commission's accountability and efficiency; (3) requires that the commission prepare an annual financial statement and submit to a financial audit conducted by an independent external auditor; (4) reduces to five years the term of office for individuals named as commissioners after enactment (a current commissioner's term is six years and the bill does not alter a commissioner's current lifetime possibility of reappointment); (5) requires the commission to implement the General Accounting Office's (GAO) recommendations to revise the administrative instructions and structural regulations of the current agency structure, as well as establish a management information system to enhance the oversight and project efficiency of the commission. CBO estimates that enactment of H.R. 3117 will result in discretionary outlays of \$28 million (provided funding is maintained at the FY 1998 level with adjustments for new initiatives established in the bill), or \$30 million (if adjusted for inflation and including the new initiatives) between 1998-2003. H.R. 3117 was introduced by Mr. Coble and was reported by the Judiciary Committee by voice vote on March 4, 1998.

S. 758—Lobbying Disclosure Technical Amendments Act makes technical amendments to the 1995 Lobbying Disclosure Act (*P.L. 104-65*), which established new regulations pertaining to independent advocacy groups and their requirement to disclose certain information to Congress when providing legislative testimony. Since the 1995 law was enacted, lobbyists have expressed concerns over compliance issues such as the amount of paperwork that must be filed when advocacy groups testify before Congress. Lobby disclosure statement records are maintained by the offices of the House Clerk and Secretary of the Senate, and each office has implemented procedures which attempt to interpret current lobby disclosure laws in such a way as to minimize the compliance difficulties experienced by outside groups. S. 758 is an attempt to formally codify changes made by the

House Clerk and Senate Secretary to better accommodate lobbyists who appear before Congress and are attempting to comply with disclosure laws. CBO estimates that enactment of S. 758 will have no significant effect on the federal budget. S. 758 was referred to the House on January 27, 1998; the bill was reported by the Senate Government Affairs Committee on November 8, 1997, and passed the Senate by unanimous consent on November 13, 1997. The bill was not considered by a House committee.

Additional Information: See *Legislative Digest*, Vol. XXVII, #6, March 13, 1998.



H.Con.Res. 227—Directing the President to Remove U.S. Armed Forces from the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Floor Situation: The House will consider H.Con.Res. 227 after it completes consideration of S.758. The resolution will be brought up under a unanimous consent agreement. The measure will be debated for two hours, equally divided between a proponent and opponent of the resolution, with no amendments permitted. One hour will be managed by Mr. Campbell as the proponent and the other hour will be equally divided by the opposition managers Mr. Gilman and Mr. Hamilton.

Summary: H.Con.Res. 227 directs the president, pursuant to section 5(c) of the War Powers Resolution (*P.L. 93-148*), to remove U.S. Armed Forces from Bosnia within 60 days unless Congress enacts a declaration of war or specifically authorizes the use of Armed Forces in Bosnia (the resolution is subject to a constitutional test by the Supreme Court). The resolution exempts from withdrawal a limited number of members of the armed forces sufficient only to protect U.S. diplomatic facilities and citizens, as well as noncombatant personnel to advise the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Commander in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Finally, the resolution declares that the requirement to remove U.S. Armed Forces from the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina does not necessarily reflect any disagreement with the purposes or accomplishments of the mission, nor does it constitute any judgment of how Congress will vote on either a declaration of war or a specific authorization for the continued deployment of armed forces. The resolution was introduced by Mr. Campbell and the International Relations Committee ordered the resolution reported unfavorably (i.e., disapproved, but forwarded to the House) by a vote of 22-16 on March 11.

Views: An official view from the Republican leadership was unavailable at press time. The Clinton Administration opposes passage of the measure.

Additional Information: See *Legislative Digest* Vol. XXVII, #6, March 13, 1998.



H.R. 1757—Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act (Conference Report)

Floor Situation: The House may consider the conference report to H.R. 1757 sometime today. Conference reports are privileged and may be considered any time three days after they are filed; they are debatable for one hour, may not be amended, and are subject to one motion to recommit. On Wednesday, March 11, the Rules Committee granted a rule waiving all points of order against the conference report and its consideration.

Summary: The conference report to H.R. 1757 authorizes a total of \$13 billion for the Department of State and related agencies in FYs 1998-2000. The bill (1) consolidates two out of three international affairs agencies back into the State Department, (2) authorizes assistance to the democratic opposition in Iraq, (3) authorizes the appropriation of \$819 million in UN arrearages, and (4) denies funding to foreign organizations that perform or promote abortions.

The conference report is divided into three major portions which: (1) authorize the consolidation of two foreign affairs agencies, the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and the U.S. Information Agency, into the State Department; (2) authorizes \$6.1 billion in FY 1998 and \$6.7 billion in FY 1999 for the State Department, the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, the U.S. Information Agency, and new funding to support the democratic opposition in Iraq, including \$3 million for Justice in Iraq, \$15 million for democratic opposition (including \$5 million for Radio Free Iraq), \$10 million for political training, and \$20 million for humanitarian assistance; and (3) mandate UN reforms and authorize \$100 million in FY 1998, \$475 million in FY 1999, and \$244 million in FY 2000 for arrearage payments to the UN. The conference report to H.R. 1757 was submitted by Mr. Gilman on March 10, 1998. The House passed H.R. 1757 by voice vote on June 11, 1997, and the Senate approved its version by a vote of 90-5 on June 17, 1997.

Views: The Republican leadership supports passage of the measure. An official Clinton Administration viewpoint was unavailable at press time.

Additional Information: See *Legislative Digest*, Vol. XXVII, #6, March 13, 1998, and Vol. XXVI, #15, Pt. II, June 3, 1997.



Brian Fortune: *Editor*

S. Kevin Washington:
Senior Legislative Analyst

Melissa Decker, Jimmy Papadimitriou,
Kevin Smith: *Legislative Analysts*

House
REPUBLICAN
Conference

Legislative
Digest

House REPUBLICAN Conference Amendment Alert!

Please attach the text of the amendment (if available) and fax to the *Legislative Digest* at x5-7298

John Boehner
Chairman
8th District, Ohio

Member Sponsoring Amendment: _____ Bill #: _____

Additional Co-sponsors (if any): _____

Staff Contact: _____ Phone #: _____ Evening Phone #: _____

Description of the amendment: _____

(Please include any additional or contextual information)

Reason for offering amendment (e.g., How will this change the bill or current law? Why should members support this change?): _____

Legislative Digest reserves the right to edit descriptions for style, readability, and provisional accuracy.

1013 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING, WASHINGTON, DC 20515 (202) 226-2302